

BOOK REVIEWS

REFERENCE

Work Ethic by Helen Molesworth (with essays by Darsie Alexander, Chris Gilbert, and Miwon Kwon and catalog entries by Julia Bryan-Wilson, Janet Kraynak, Helen Molesworth, and Judith Rodenbeck (University Park, PA, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003, \$29.95 hardcover) focuses on the changed organization of work in society during the 1960s. Artists such as Allan Kaprow and Yoko Ono to Andy Warhol and Richard Serra reacted against the "art market" and staged performances that mixed everyday life with theater and in yet other, often ironic ways challenged the system of marketing, display and aesthetic discourse that ascribes exceptional monetary as well as cultural value to paintings and sculpture.

Work Ethic, published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same name organized by the Baltimore Museum of Art, brings together a cross-section of such radical endeavors and opens a fresh perspective on their genesis and meaning.

Included in this book is such diverse material as Bruce Nauman's videotapes to Roxy Paine's painting machine, all illustrated by black and white photographs which were the way to document such temporal art. The first half of the book has perceptive essays by scholars who have dealt with ephemeral art, documentation and philosophy of art in the 1960s. The second half includes catalog entries on individual artist as well as major ideas and movements, including short texts by art historians that offer generation information on the artists as well as specific interpretations of selected works. Some artists are Vito Acconci, Frank Stella, Chris Burden, Robert Morris, Eleanor Antin, Martha Rosler, Tehching Hsieh, Hope Ginsburg, as well as Sol LeWitt, Donald Judd, Robert Rauschenberg, John Baldessari, John Cage, Yoko Ono, George Maciunas, Alison Knowles, George Brecht, Gabriel Orozco, and Tom Marioni, Gilbert & George and so much more. Throughout the catalog, there is as well as a lively dialogue on the museum's relationship to art that questions the rules of both the workplace and the art world. The show was also seen at the Des Moines Center for the Arts.

Digital Currents: Art in the Electronic Age by Margot Lovejoy (New York, Routledge, 2004, 3d expanded edition) surveys the major impact of video and digital technologies on visual culture and artistic practice. At the same time, it examines the revolutionary changes taking place in the role of the

artist as social communicator. This third updated, expanded edition has a new chapter on the internet and new sections on sound, narrative, and on science and art, making it an ideal new media and visual culture source book. Glossary, index, selected bibliography, many black and white, 11 color photos. www.digitalcurrents.com

GENERAL

Passage by Andy Goldsworthy (New York, Abrams, 2004, \$60.00 hardcover) is the latest book by renowned sculptor Goldsworthy with its central theme of journeys that people, rivers, landscapes, and even stones take through space and time. The book starts with the building of a cairn near his home in Scotland, where he states that when the sculpture is at its beginning, it has fragility, but becomes described by conversations with those who experience it, and since this is one in which he will be conversing with it from day to day when he is home, it is an indication of his own strong attachment to his place.

To be awestruck with the work of an artist is to have not just an "ah-hah experience" but in fact to be spiritually involved with the environmental work that Goldsworthy creates. In his own village, his work is stunning, fragile, and environmentally symbiotic. In New York City on the roof of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, his work has stone protected by wood in an urban but sympathetic setting, a temporal work that was seen all summer in New York City.

Herein there is the commemoration of one of Goldsworthy's most publicized recent commissions, the Garden of Stones, a memorial to the Holocaust, at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City. The book contains his work using light as a medium, as well as the 3 cairns now residing in the USA. Each work is accompanied by a diary by the artist speaking of the construction, the feelings, and space and time. Truly a remarkable addition to the Goldsworthy bibliography. 200 full-color illustrations

Common Ground: Discovering Community in 150 Years of Art by Philip Brookman, Merry Foresta, Paul Roth and Jacquelyn Days Serwer (London, Merrell, 2004, \$49.95 hardback) with 130 illustrations, 40 in color accompanies the exhibition at the Corcoran Museum of Art exhibition (through 31 January 2005) presenting highlights from the collection of Julia J. Norell, a collection that celebrates the way artists have explored the nature and diversity of community during the past 150 years. Artists represented include Shimon Attie, Whitfield Lovell, Carrie Mae Weems, Howard

Finster, Ben Shahn, Gordon Parks, Jacob Lawrence, and William Christenberry, among others.

Arranged thematically with key themes as past and present, a sense of place, community, hope and belief, and memory and tribute, this collection includes photography, painting, sculpture and works on paper. In other words, there are 19th century portraits and images of American westward expansion, modern photographs from around the world, folk art, sculpture drawings, and assemblage.

The collector, Judy Norell, grew up in Monticello Arkansas, and in Washington, D.C. While at the University of Madras in India, she realized the commonality of her culture and those vastly different than her own, understanding the beauty and the suffering not dissimilar to those in the American South. 187 works, artist biographies and selected bibliographies

Rapture of the Deep: The Art of Ray Troll (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2004, \$29.95 hardcover) has an alluring draw when one knows that Troll, an irreverent artist whose strange collection of fish, bears, ravens and fossils can be found in museums, galleries, books, as well as on immensely popular T-shirts (worn by the likes of Harrison Ford, Motley Crue and Led Zeppelin). This volume captures the wit, beauty, and energy of this unique art in 90 full color illustrations with 71 color drawings.

Troll has a deep and abiding artistic engagement with fish, which is vivid and delicious. He doesn't only "fish" but sees powerful connections between biological diversity, the evolution of life on earth, and the careless habits of people. Titles such as "Spawn Till you Die," "Life's a Fish and Then You Fry," and "Bassackwards," in which fish use money, liquor and literature as bait to lure human, give you an idea that his mind is full of wit, humor and humanity. Writer Brad Matsen writes a lively introduction to the art and life of his "sole brother," in which the words and images come alive on a road trip down the Pacific Coast. Recommended for all swimmers wherever you are.

Italian Memorial Sculpture 1820-1940: A Legacy of Love by Sarah Berresford (London, Frances Lincoln, 2004, \$75.00 dist. by Merrell) with photographs by Robert W. Fichter and Robert Freidus is the first book in English, and the most comprehensive in any language, to explore the extraordinary collections of 19th and early 20th century sculpture found in the cemeteries of northern and central Italy. The most

celebrated sculptures were commissioned by families, both Christian and Jewish, to memorialize their loved ones—creating outdoor museums that are little known outside Italy. Styles range from neo-classical to Symbolism and include some marvelous examples of Art Deco. How many times have walks through Italian cemeteries revealed not only famous people buried there, but memorialized by exquisite sculpture!

Scholarly texts by Berresford, Freidus, Fichter, Fred Licht, Francesca Bregoli, James Stevens Curl and Franco Sborgi make this a reference tool as well as a splendid visual presentation. 400 illustrations, gazetteer, annotated bibliography and index.

The Cubist Painters by Guillaume Apollinaire, newly translated with commentary by Peter Read (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2004, \$65.00 cloth, \$29.95 paper) is a faithful and fluid translation of Apollinaire's text, providing the translator's own scholarly analysis of its importance in the history of modernism. He examines Apollinaire's art criticism, his relationship to the Cubist movement, and, more specifically, the genesis of Cubist Painters through its various revisions and proofs. With 45 plates from the original edition, this new volume brings a new generation into the realm of Apollinaire's vitality and vision.

Chris Ware by Daniel Raeburn (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2004, \$19.95 paper) is a portrait of one of today's most renowned cartoonists, widely considered an artist of genius. Combining innovative comic book art, hand lettering, and graphic design, Ware's uniquely appealing work is characterized by ceaseless experimentation with narrative and graphic forms.

Discovered by many of us in his own comic book, *The Acme Novelty Library*, Ware also appeared in *New City* and the *New Yorker*. Creating the character Jimmy Corrigan in a full-page, full-color strip in the Chicago tabloid *New City*, he combined six years' worth into a best-selling novel named after Jimmy that spans an Irish-American family's life in Chicago from the Civil War to the present. Generating many honors, the graphic novel came into its own.

Raeburn interviewed Ware for countless hours to make fascinating connections between Jimmy Corrigan's fictional life and Chris Ware's actual life, discussing the scope of Ware's career. A fascinating career of an ingenious, uncanny artist who has changed the scope of the graphic novel, graphic design, and contemporary art.

Handwritten: Expressive Lettering in the Digital Age by Steven Heller & Mirko Ilic (New York, Thames & Hudson, 2004, \$45.00 hardcover) is an exuberant declaration that the hand still has a function in our society, especially to create hand-drawn graphics to invite and entice, allowing us to admire the creator's immediacy and craftsmanship. Especially in this age of digital typography, there is validity in culling 500 illustrations from around the world to validate handwritten typographics, such as the Calvin Klein campaign designed by M/M Paris, the self-inflicted body marks of Stefan Sagmeister, and the painstaking illustrations of Pentagram partner Paula Scher.

Steven Heller, design historian, and art director of the New York Times Book and author of many successful books on graphic design places the contemporary work in a broader context while the heart of the book features hundreds of graphics, presented in creative themes: sleight of hand, scrawl, script, stitch, stimulate, shadow, suggestive and sarcastic. His co-author, Mirko Ilic, a New York-based graphic designer, has won numerous awards for his hand-drawn design work. The book itself is dedicated to R. Crumb, "master of hand-drawn letters." A must for all collections! Bibliography.

Robert Smithson, edited by Eugenie Tsai with Cornelia Butler (Los Angeles, Museum of Contemporary Art and Berkeley, University of California Press, 2004, \$50.00 hardcover, \$34.95 paper) has contributions by Alexander Alberro, Suzaan Boettger, Cornelia Butler, Thomas Crow, Mark Linder, Ann Reynolds, Jennifer L. Roberts, Moira Roth, Richard Sieburth, Robert A. Sobieszek, and Eugenie Tsai, has 280 pages, has 240 color and 76 black and white illustrations and accompanies a traveling show at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Dallas Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art for the first comprehensive American retrospective of Smithson's complex and highly influential body of work. His revolutionary ideas moved art beyond the walls of the museum into the landscape itself. Famed for his Spiral Jetty, a 1500-foot rock coil dramatically situated in Utah's Great Salt Lake, Smithsonian also broke new ground in films, photographs, writings, drawings, sculptures, and collages. What's missing in the essays is any indication of the sense of humor that is exhibited in many of the videos and even in the paintings. The volume also includes a catalog of the contents of Smithson's personal library, as well as a previously

unpublished interview with the artist conducted by Moira Roth shortly before his untimely death in 1973. Checklist and selected chronology and bibliography.

The Artist's Reality: Philosophies of Art by Mark Rothko (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2004, \$25) probably written in 1940-41, has been published after being buried in a warehouse for more than 40 years. This book was left unfinished and the title was scribbled on the front cover as it was found. He began to write this years before he had begun painting abstractions, and so his chapter titles such as "Plasticity," "Space," "The Myth," and "Primitivism", among other things shows him as an observer who provides unique insight into his thoughts about art history, the modern art world, beauty, the Renaissance, the true nature of "American art," and the challenges of being an artist in society.

This is a personal book about Rothko's philosophical and aesthetic foundations of his paintings and the way in which he views himself as an artist. He longs for the Renaissance, admiring Giotto and Durer. He also dismisses surrealism as a school of art believing that the artist should be an activist in the human conditions common to all of us. Luckily, Christopher Rothko, Mark's son, discovered the manuscript and decided to look at it himself, hearing from a publisher that it was "time for it to see the light of day." And because Rothko considered himself a "painter of ideas", to have a book full of those ideas is truly a gift, according to Christopher Rothko in his introduction. He and his sister felt it was time for the public to see this book, read it and realize it was part of his legacy.

The book is illustrated with a small selection of relevant examples of Rothko's own work as well as reproductions of pages from the actual manuscript.

Video Green: Los Angeles Art and the Triumph of Nothingness (Los Angeles/New York, Semiotext(e), 2004, dist. by MIT Press, \$14.95 paper) is a series of 24 pieces reflecting on Los Angeles art, most previously published in *Arttext*. Thus one can understand that they include her sado-masochistic practice, her semi-estranged husband Sylvère Lotringer, the late Kathy Acker's notebooks, her various living spaces, her visceral reactions as a New Yorker who relocates to Los Angeles, and the San Diego Zoo. Yet this is a very readable flowing prose used to observe L.A. artists and works, leading to a scathing critique of the MFA programs around which the Los Angeles scene revolves. Kraus is her individual self and that makes for a fascinating read. She is a shrewd, witty, analytic writer who is ready to take on what needs to be

criticized—an empty city devoid of soul.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Create and Be Recognized: Photography on the Edge by John Turner and Deborah Kochko (San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 2004, \$40 hardcover) is the first study of an electrifying and newly recognized subset of outsider art—outsider photography. This is a catalog to San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center for the Arts exhibition showcasing the talents of 17 artists who use photographs and photographic elements in their work—not only isolated and untrained artists, but those propelled to create work through the extremes of disposition or circumstance, and expressing no interest in the art market.

Some of their shared characteristics are they are unschooled, extraordinarily prolific, and the essence of their creativity is unorthodox, enigmatic, compulsive, compelling, abnormally earnest, self-absorbed, and subversive. Memorable outsider works have been created by schizophrenics, emotionally disturbed, and others living beyond the fringe of mainstream society. But what signifies these photographers is their compulsion to create, which is pure and absolute.

With about 150 mesmerizing images, this book looks at collage, manipulated tableau and photomontage. Included is work by Finster, Henry Darger, and Adolf Wölfli, as well as lesser known but equally dramatic Lee Godie, who lived on the streets in Chicago, taking her self-portraits in the photo booth of a Greyhound station; C.T. McClusky who worked as a circus clown and spent his winter months in a rooming house in the 1940s and 1950s, creating collages on shirt cardboard. He enjoyed using crayons, found materials, foil, string, and cuttings from animal-cracker boxes in order to evoke sentimental reflections of circus life. Work is included from the 19th century as well. This is a mind-blowing introduction to something that has been going on for decades, thanks to the compulsion of those who see the camera as a democratic medium. Notes and author biographies.

Anonymous: Enigmatic Images from Unknown Photographers by Robert Flynn Johnson, with an introduction by William Boyd (New York, Thames & Hudson, 2004, \$45.00 cloth, 200 photos printed in color) indicates a new wave on the part of collectors and curators to turn to the great mass of anonymous photographs that excite our imagination with their random recording of public works and private moments.

The 200 examples reproduced here belong to

Johnson and include many of transcendent beauty and psychological insight, countered by our own imaginations and magical charges as observers who speculate on the circumstances in which they were taken. While Boyd categorizes the reasons why, Johnson calls it "accidental art" in his essay which is stimulating and revelatory. He speaks to the nature and appeal of anonymous photography, answers whether these are "fine art", speaks to the popularity and profitability of collecting and how to start one's own collection.

Organized into themes that govern our lives—from birth to death, from love to war, from travel to celebrity—photographs gathered here are innocent and yet energetic as well as poignant, giving insight into the human secrets with which we can all identify. A beautifully printed book. Notes on the photographs.

Close to Home: An American Album, with an essay by D.J. Waldie (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 2004, \$24.95 paper) is a collection of candid shots, snapshots taken and then discarded by their owners, separated from the stories they captured. Oftentimes, these family photographs, forgotten and then recovered from storage facilities, end up at swap meets and flea markets around the country. Published to coincide with an exhibition of the same name at the J. Paul Getty Museum, this collection of "found" photographs asks for stories behind them, who the people are, what they were doing, and why the photo was taken.

The range goes from the absurd—a lingerie-clad woman brandishing a high-ball; to the poignant—a father holding newborn twins; to the documentary—an automatic carwash in the 1950s. American life is captured in these photos, an America of bygone times. There are more than 100 snapshots taken between the 1930s and the 1960s by anonymous, untrained people. In addition, there is a selection of vibrant color images from the 1940s to the 1960s printed by contemporary artist Guy Stricherz; and family portraits made by well-known photographers such as Thomas Eakins, Edward Weston and Dorothea Lange. 54 color and 88 black and white illustrations.

Axis of Evil: Perforated Praeter Naturam, stamp art navigated and curated by Michael Hernandez de Luna (Chicago, Qualilatica Press, dist. by W.W. Norton, 2004, \$75.00 with DVD) comes along just at the time when many Americans feel misled and deprived of rights as Americans by the Bush cartel. This large format (12 x 12") hardcover book exquisitely printed on 211 pages, with 7 in-depth essays, may be just the right gift for your open-minded friends. The artwork

is stamp art, artwork in the forms of actual stamps, created by 54 artists from 11 countries.

The brainchild of Jim Swanson, a Chicago art gallery owner, who became frustrated with the Bush foreign policy, entrusted the extraordinary postal forger, Michael Hernandez de Luna, to illustrate this book with veteran "mail artists" who could do perforated sheets of artist stamps. The essays range from cynicism to surrealism, from blasphemy to iconoclast, covering the psychological and socio-political concepts of evil with the symbols, fears and contradictions that are the aftermath of the post-9/11 world.

Artists include such well-known artists as Anna Banana, Buzz Blurr, John Held Jr., Jas W. Felter, HR Fricker, Eiichi Matsuhasi, and many more. The DVD includes interviews with 16 journalists, artists, scholars and activists such as Martha Nussbaum, Howard Zinn, Bernardine Dohrn, exploring the concept of evil, showing how it has been used to justify political and military actions throughout the world. A stunning treatment of evil in our world today!

Leve Sieht Beuys (Block Beuys - Photographs) by Manfred Leve with essay by Eugen Blume and photographs by Manfred Leve (Gottingen, Steidl, 2004, \$65.00 hardcover, dist. by d.a.p.) documents Joseph Beuys' creating his Block Beuys installation in the 1960s out of greatly varied materials and salvaged items that were selected, manipulated, altered and brought together in unusual ways. The objects correspond to one another and, in their unmistakable forms, refer to the artist's work in its entirety. Block Beuys is installed in a series of seven interconnected rooms in the Hessisches Landesmuseum in Darmstadt. The photographer, Manfred Level, has documented Block Beuys, not only in the variety of its individual pieces, but also with a view of the entire work of art. His black-and-white photographs, devoid of any kind of staging, allow a thorough and genuine look at the radiant work. 223 gorgeous duotones.

Extending the Artist's Hand: Contemporary Sculpture from the Walla Walla Foundry by Mark Anderson, Chris Bruce and Keith Wells, with an essay by Jim Dine (Pullman, Washington State University Press, 2004, \$24.95 hardcover) explains how a quiet country town nestled at the foot of Washington's Blue Mountains is the unlikely home of a world-class art facility, the Walla Walla Foundry. Internationally known artists such as Terry Allen, Robert Arneson, Deborah Butterfield, Jim Dine, and Tom Otterness have utilized the firm's services to create, produce, and

install finished art pieces worldwide. With full color photography and informative text, **Extending the Artist's Hand** celebrates the collaboration between artist and technician, explores the fascinating journey of metal sculpture from initial concept to final installation, and documents the history and achievements of this extraordinary Eastern Washington enterprise. Heavily illustrated with color plates, this volume also contains a chronology of the foundry, selected installation sites, a list of illustrations, and a glossary of terms.

CATALOGS

The Inspired Moustache: An exhibition of Diverse Expressions of Salvador Dali through Books and Memorabilia from the Collection of Rik Pavlescak published by the Bienes Center for the Literary Arts at the Broward County Library in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, 2004, documents the exhibition from 20 September 2004 - 15 January 2005, by James A. Findlay. Rik Pavlescak has an introductory essay, citing his obsession with the collecting of Daliana, and explaining the breadth and depth of his collection of books and ephemera by an extraordinary artist. The full catalog lists 116 items with color photos, as well as a select Webliography, indices for authors, titles, publishers and formats. A bargain at \$15.00 from Broward County Library, Bienes Center, 100 So. Andrews Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301.

Fluxus - Art into Life, a major exhibition of Fluxus materials, performance, ephemera at the Urawa Art Museum from 20 November 2004 through 20 February 2005 is documented with an outstanding exhibition catalog which has an insert of an Event Map 1958 - 1978 (in English), plus a preface in English and then 230 color plates of the books and ephemera in the exhibition. Included are photographs from the 29 May journey to Mt. Fuji with Ben Patterson and Ay-o. Fluxus Universe is a conversation between Kuniharu Akiyama, Ay-O, and Mieko Shiomi, originally printed in 1983. A brilliant chronology for 1960 -1978 is printed on translucent vellum so that each year imposes itself on the next. A list of all Fluxus participants is included, a select bibliography, plus an index for artists and an index for titles of works. This has been a labor of love by the curators, Midori Yoshimoto and Keitetsu Murai. This is a stunning catalog, although mostly in Japanese. There is enough English to show how Fluxus has penetrated Japan. For more information: info@uam.urawa.saitama.jp or go to <http://www.uam.urawa.saitama.jp>